

THE RADICAL.

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DISCOURSES CONCERNING THE FOUNDATIONS OF RELIGIOUS BELIEF.

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II.

REAL AND IMAGINARY AUTHORITY.

WE have urged that the Fountainhead of Religion is not Tradition, but a present and constant Inspiration. Original Authority in matters of Belief therefore resides in the testimony of the Spiritual Consciousness. It is by this term that we designate the knowledge we possess concerning spiritual things, through the present operation of our natural faculties. We are immediately conscious of all the Essential Realities to which we stand related — of Deity, of Duty, of Immortality. In some form or other, we do, as spiritual beings, see these *directly*, as the eye sees objects distant or near. And this is our real ground of belief in them. Each person, moreover, believes in them not primarily because every one else does, but *for the same reason* that every one else does, namely, the prodigious force of the evidence which resides in his individual consciousness. This testimony cannot be supplanted, nor even approached in value, by any of those forms of reasoning from analogy or traditional belief or special revelation, which are so commonly appealed to as conclusive evidence of the truths in question. They are all comparative failures ; and to resort to them where some exceptional cause for a time interferes with the natural sight, is more apt to weaken belief than to strengthen it ; as would any attempt to demonstrate the existence of the visible world which ignored the evidence of the senses. Such is the authority of the Spiritual Consciousness through its intuition of our Essential Realities.

But it is more than the basis of Intuitive Belief. It is the primary

ground of assurance in reference to those highest products of Religious Reflection, to those noblest ideas concerning God, Duty, and Immortal Life, which comparatively few have reached, as well as to those Intuitions which are common to all mankind. An implicit trust in the present testimony of our natural faculties, in Consciousness, whether intuitive or reflective, is the first, *indispensable condition* of all knowledge whatsoever, from the least to the greatest, from physical to celestial.

And of this primal foundation here is the inevitable law. In any given age or individual, the Spiritual Consciousness is according to the moral, intellectual, spiritual status which that age or individual has attained. It testifies only of *the actual condition of the inward life*. It is the witness on which we necessarily rely, as it is the inevitable court of final appeal : but its law is that we shall *judge* according as we *are*.

Does not then this sole and inalienable authority turn out to be incapable of teaching anything with certitude, in other words, to be no authority at all? Not, we reply, unless our spiritual organization is inherently a fraud. The eye may see imperfectly ; but *if really an organ of vision*, it must see at least the general forms of things as they are, and we are safe in relying on its testimony as to these. And so the Spiritual Consciousness cannot become so disorganized but that it sees in some way, worthy or unworthy, the essential spiritual relations of Human Nature. In all times the Soul has borne witness of Deity, of a Law of Duty, of an invincible need of Immortality, as positive Facts. And in perceiving these, it perceives the foundation of all higher spiritual knowledge. As the authority on which these fundamental truths are accepted, it must be adequate to accredit the truth into which these unfold. And so it is as certain as it is indispensable, that the natural faculties can be so enlightened, purified, and matured that the Spiritual Consciousness shall become clear and healthful : able to apprehend God, Duty, Immortality, in their nobler meanings, and through a natural intimacy between these and the inmost personality recognize their unquestionable truth by a kind of intuition, appropriate to this higher sphere. In these maturer stages of Religious Belief, the Soul also makes good its claim as the ultimate and adequate Court of Appeal : ultimate, because we cannot possibly go behind the testimony of those natural organs through which truth is apprehended ; and adequate to certify truth, if certitude be not impossible in the nature of things. And in its maturer experience it is fully aware of this its jurisdiction, and asks no confirmation from sources external to itself. It knows that it cannot stand outside its own nature, nor receive light from above except under the conditions of human vision ;

and it respects these conditions as legitimate and trustworthy. The laws of our Nature are the voice of God. There is a natural Inspiration, and there is no other.

Even if the Soul could *not* yield certitude, we should gain nothing by the attempt to put a higher authority in its place. God has enthroned it and made it alone His viceregent and interpreter, by irreversible law. All Bibles, traditions, creeds, all Persons or performances claimed to be 'supernatural,' all assumed Infallibilities of speech or record, must commend themselves to the natural faculties, be judged by them, fall under their limitations and their laws, *be lost in them altogether as respects authority*, before they can be accepted. They are accepted, if at all, only in such shape as the Spiritual Consciousness gives them; accepted, in other words, on *its* authority. And this is true of every individual to whom they are presented, let it be ever so vehemently denied.

The Religious Books, by which whole races have supposed their faith divinely guaranteed of old, are really but threads on which they have strung their own inspirations, imaginations and desires, as age after age evoked these out of present needs. Not the thread, but that which was hung upon it, was after all the substance of belief. And the authority on which belief reposed, resided not in those Gods of the Past who were supposed to have let down the sacred chain from their thrones ages ago, but in these living hands of the believer, which, inspired from above or from beneath, were daring to hang image after image upon it after the likeness of the hour's wisdom or folly; daring, not because they were overbold, but because they had no other choice; because man cannot live by the dead Past; because he is a living Soul, and his God is a God of the living present Consciousness. The Code of Manu never really formed the practical rule of East Indian jurisprudence. Hindu law was the ever changing creation of Hindu character and circumstances, and the Law Book was read in the light of these. The oldest Veda, whose every syllable has been sacred for thousands of years, has never spoken its original meaning to a single generation since it was made into a Book. A thousand sects have been founded on its readings; every sacred syllable has hundreds of glosses; every age and school has had its own interpretation, claiming absolute authority. Hindu Law, Science, Philosophy, Ethics, Life, all profess to be but expansions of that Divine Text. Yet in itself the simple old Hymn-and-Prayer Book is mainly innocent of them all. The so called 'Law of Moses' was, in all probability, never practically carried into effect. As soon as it had been brought together out of many ages, elaborated and enlarged by priestly

exigencies, and accepted as the national code, it began to be a thread for Rabbinical readings and interpretations: it refused no fancy, speculation or adaptation, wise or mad, that was born of later Jewish brains. And the name of the Lawgiver was made to cover even the transformation of the simple Unity of his God into that multiplicity of Divine Potences, in which the Gentile philosophies indulged.

The old Bibles, being of Nature, will hold all the meanings. The cups that Love and Homage fill can never overflow. But it is the growing Soul, pouring the ever new and ever larger libations, that shapes the cup to its own desire as it pours.

A traditional faith, no less than a heretical one, rests on the authority of the natural faculties; and the difference is only in the condition and treatment of these faculties. The traditionalist may imagine that he has taken his belief on the "divine authority of the Bible or the Church." He has really been decided by that point of discernment at which his Spiritual Consciousness has arrived. He has obeyed his own undeveloped religious senses. And because he does not know that his attempt to escape the necessity of judging according to his spiritual state, is a failure, he suffers that Consciousness which is the light or the darkness of all that is in him, to remain crude, inert, enslaved, instead of quickening and unfolding it by present light and duty. And so it lies gazing at a dead Bible and a dead creed, self-condemned to inflict its own death on that from which it is seeking life. And there is reaction as well as action in this. For his conscience is none the less stifled and perverted by the errors of the Bible and the creed, for the reason that he has taken them upon his own authority and interprets them by his own state.

But I do not propose to dwell on the mischiefs of traditionalism, except as illustrative of the law, that in all cases whatsoever, even where it is most strenuously denied, *we do and must believe on the authority of our natural faculties, and on no other.*

Much as Christians have insisted that they rest on an infallible Bible, they have never really shaped their creeds by the Bible, whether fallible or infallible; but always primarily by the actual condition of things within and without themselves, putting their trust in this, and making the Bible mean essentially what this demanded.

The traditional Theology of Christendom is not explicable from the Bible. It was possible only in proportion as the life of Jesus had receded into the past, and its record was beheld through the idealizing imagination. It originated in the speculations of bishops and presbyters, men like Cyprian, Athanasius, and Augustin, and in the

progressive development of postapostolic Christianity towards Catholic Unity. It owed its acceptance in a great degree to the necessity of ecclesiastical organization. It appealed to the State to lend it the sanction of physical force. The evidence is conclusive that however the Church might insist that the Bible was the sole foundation of its belief and the anchor of its hope, it was from the beginning laying foundations and resting its hope in something else. Reason, however misused, was all the while building the creeds, which report its history more than they do the meaning of the Old Testament or the New. They are even in many respects far more Aryan than Shemitic. They bear the stamp of the Latin and of the Greek, rather than of the Hebrew mind. The needs, aspirations, and practical efficiencies of society, of church and state, were really the anchor of hope. The God of Christian Belief was such a God as the condition of the Christian world induced it to believe in; and the authority of the Bible was but an illusory name for the authority of the Spiritual Consciousness. Bibliolatry was none the less a yoke of bondage: for the limitations of the ancient Book could not but be transferred in large measure to the minds of its worshippers, and all the more because the prevailing ignorance of this inalienable judicial function of the soul caused the neglect of its capacities for light and freedom. But though Bibliolatry could demoralize the natural faculties, it could not supplant them by other foundations of Belief. It was itself a practical confession of that appeal to their authority which it perverted, dishonored, and denied. They are the primitive rock on which all other foundations rest. *The appeal to them, conscious or unconscious, is the one inevitable fact; an incarnate Word of God in Human History; continually denied, yet continually bearing witness of itself on the very lips that deny it. It is no modern speculation. It is the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world; in the world always, though the world knew it not.*

Follow on the historical track of this supposed "Authority of the Bible." As soon as Bibliolatry was born, Ecclesiolatry or Worship of the Church, its twin brother, began to supplant it, in fact, if not in name. The Worship of Tradition, which, in the Catholic Church, *was a confession of the necessity of recognising wants the Bible had not met*, came at last to supplant and set it aside altogether. In the course of eight or ten centuries we find Reformers justifying their assaults on a Church which had begun in Bibliolatry, by the charge that it had forgotten the claims of the Bible in the authority of human works and human traditions. Little indeed did the Catholic Church believe in the Bible as the foundation of human faith. With all the errors

of its doctrine concerning the authority of the Church, that doctrine at least implied that the Spirit which it affirmed to be within the Bible was also in Human Nature outside the Bible, and did not go out of the world when the Canon was closed, but continued on with equal efficacy and authority in the Spiritual Consciousness of every successive age. The Protestant, for example, limits supernatural power to the blood of Jesus. The Catholic finds the same kind of efficacy in the blood of all saintly persons since. The Protestant shuts up the Miracle within the Apostolic Age. The Catholic brings it down to meet the wants of all ages as they come. It is of course manifest that this superior consistency of the Catholic Church is obtained at the expense of an exclusive authority of the Bible. And this has been her merit. She actually took up the defence of Natural Religion against the Protestantism of Wiclif and Huss. Bishop Pecocke styled their followers Bible Men, and admonished them that they had forgotten the impossibility that the Bible should add any new moral truths, or do more than help confirm duties already known to human nature. So much for Catholicism.

The essence of the Protestant theory was the authority of the Bible. But the essence of its *actual* PROCEDURE was the right of private judgment in matters of belief. The sum of the whole was this ; that by virtue of that right certain persons *chose to worship the Bible*, and to declare it the sole authority on which belief could stand. But if it was sole authority, what had authorized them to exercise private choice upon it? They had obeyed a necessity deeper than all theories or declarations about the Bible. *At the expense of consistency with their claim in its behalf, they had followed the Spiritual Consciousness of their age.* All the while that Luther was persecuting Carlstadt for what he called throwing away the Gospels, he was himself denouncing whatever he disliked in the Bible in the name of private judgment. And this setting up the Bible against the freedom of private inquiry with one hand, while the other is forced to plant the standard of that very freedom, is the shame of Protestantism at this day.

For what *is* Protestantism but the appeal to the free faculties of human nature against irrational and outworn traditions? And yet it dares disparage those faculties and that Nature in the name of the Bible! What enabled it to *choose* the Bible as its salvation, but that very Reason whose claim to judge the Inspiration, the Miracles, the Authority of the Bible each sect perpetually denies, when the decision differs from its own? What could be more perverse than attempting to suppress the liberty which is its own vital force, and this in the name of an authority which had no original weight in its own deter-

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minations! Yet Protestantism persists in reiterating with intolerant zeal that the Bible is the sole foundation of Faith, while the multiplicity of its sects and the changing definitions of its dogma, are demonstrating, every moment, that it rests on a wholly different foundation, even *the authority of its own maturing consciousness*. Its very intolerance is nothing but the detected limitation of its intellectual and spiritual sight.

In the original appeal of Protestantism to the private judgment, all right of appeal to the Bible as decisive authority perished, and all actual pretense of its authority should have perished with the right of appeal to it. Nothing was left but private interpretations; and its supposed universal validity as a Law failed for the lack of a recognized Court of Interpretation. Men were in reality thrown behind authoritative creed, inspired record, and official Christ, and called upon to take counsel of their spiritual and intellectual faculties. Such is the substance of that revolution, however ignored or denied. No intermediate ground is tenable. Either carry private judgment to its principle in the immediate relation of the individual soul to truth, or else carry the denial of private judgment to its principle in the submission of the soul to absolute outward authority. Either in the soul or out of it is the Rock of Ages. Protestantism chose the former alternative. The other was indeed an impossibility; an illusion which not even Catholicism could make a reality. And when the Catholic charges the Protestant with forsaking positive authority for the uncertainty of mere private opinion, he proves his ignorance of the necessary laws of mind, as well as of the process by which he has himself arrived at his belief. One may *enslave* his private judgment by yielding himself to the Catholic Church; but how does he thereby escape the limitations of his private judgment? What interprets the teachings of the Church for him save his own faculties, the very same fallacious powers which he dared not trust with Protestant liberty? Will Catholic slavery improve them? If they cannot be trusted to interpret God's revelations to his soul, can they be trusted to interpret God's revelations to the Church? But suppose we grant that the Church has had the gift of infallibility. Of what use is this, if it must be run through the distorting lenses of his capacities and character, before it reaches his soul? Or can a doctrine reach the soul without such transition and the assimilation it involves? Can a brutish person, who is not able and does not care, to read the name on the ballot he is told to deposit at the polls, be enabled to see truth by virtue of the infallibility of his Church? Or can an intellectual man, who cannot read thought otherwise than his peculiar genius prescribes, lay aside

its peculiarities in the one instance of his relations to his infallible Church, and see her doctrine purely through *her* eyes?

Our spiritual faculties are closer to us than a Bible or a Christ. According to their condition of development we judge all persons and things. They are our Mediator: God can speak to us only through their testimony. On them we rest, our sole authority, whether they be free or enslaved; and the more thoroughly we accept the fact, the more likely shall we be to see clearly, to reach unquestionable certainty. As the Christian world advances, it comes to the practical confession of this in Protestantism.

There were indeed earlier confessors of it, some of them more clear-sighted and consistent in their acceptance than the Reformers, who were historically their children. Luther but made imperfect practical application to the Church of what the philosophy and mysticism of the Middle Ages had been dreaming out. For all great reforms begin in the dreams of speculative men, who turn away from the husks of pretended authority to brood over the mysteries of their own souls, and find God the nearest of all realities. Luther himself confesses that he owed his spiritual liberty in no small degree to the mystics of the preceding centuries. The class of minds of which Tauler and the author of the *Theologia Germanica* are the best known representatives, were the fathers of the Reformation. These men did not know how radical they were. They seem scarcely aware how absolutely they had accepted the fact that the soul has *immediate* access to spiritual certainty. They used the old phraseology of Bible-worship: they called Jesus God, and the Bible the Word of God, and even quoted John as final authority. But this was only looseness of expression, a verbal dress they had forgotten to throw aside. You can see by the sweet intimacy and grand assurance of their communion with the living Spirit, that their meaning goes to the reality of God's immediate teaching, and to the authority of their own spiritual intuitions.

Then back of these were Nominalists and Realists, the scholastic philosophers who battled over the abstruse formulas of essential Being, and argued in all possible forms the abstract question of the relation of Reason to Faith. They believed themselves orthodox; but they had far more reliance on the formulas of Aristotle than on the texts of Scripture. Their feet were on the floors of the Intellectual Consciousness of their Age, not at all on the Bible platform. This Scholasticism, the main business of the Middle Age theologians, was a profoundly earnest study of the Abstract Laws of Human Thought. Verbose and dreamy as they were, they pursued it in the most unlim-

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ited trust in the divine inspiration of those organic processes which they were striving to comprehend. No Bibliolater ever had so intense a faith in the Infallibility of the Bible as these pioneers of modern Theology and Philosophy had in the capacity of the Intellectual and Spiritual Constitution of Man, rightly understood and used, to yield certitude in the investigation of truth, and the aspiration after eternal life. So that long before Luther's day the necessity of final appeal to this transcendent testimony was bravely accepted, even by men who imagined themselves to be devout believers in Bible Authority. It is remarkable that so large a portion of the Protestant world should even now cling to their old delusion, yet fail of the unconscious courage which redeemed and almost neutralized it.

How can the Quaker hold that the Bible is the Court of Final Appeal, in face of his claim to an Inward Light by which he is taught what the Bible means? Surely the interpreter, not the thing interpreted, is the ultimate authority. How can the Swedenborgian maintain that doctrine in face of the fact that an inspiration more original and profound than that of his 'Divine Word' must be assumed both in Swedenborg and himself, to justify the deduction from that Word of his doctrines of correspondence and the triple sense? Or what can the Universalist mean by the final authority of the Bible, who dares to say, on the authority of his own critical faculty alone, that the Bible does not teach eternal punishment? Or what shall we say of the Unitarian, who, after having rejected the miraculous conception recorded in two Gospels, and denied the strengthening angel in Gethsemane, and the healing angel at the Pool of Bethesda, and the resurrection of saints at the crucifixion, after having expunged the opening chapters of Matthew's Gospel and the closing verses of John's, and cast the Second Epistle of Peter out of the canon — denounces Strauss and Baur, and the historical school of Biblical critics generally, as undermining the foundations of Religious Belief, and jealously guards "the miraculous element in the Bible" against the assaults of the Anti-Supernaturalist, as guarantee of an indispensable authority therein! Or how shall the Liberal build his "Broad Church" on a 'Lord and Master,' on whose words and life he passes judgment, as he would on those of Plato or of Pius Ninth.

The testimony on this matter is all one way. The affirmation of all transcendental religious philosophy, from Abelard and Bruno down to Emerson and Parker and the free Theism of this day, that there is no stable basis of authority but the Spiritual Consciousness, is proved even by the unconscious confession of its opponents, both on the Catholic and Protestant sides. It is vain to deny this foundation

with the lips. It is senseless to degrade and demoralize it in ourselves by enslavement to traditions. It cannot be undermined ; it cannot be supplanted. And it is what our lives make it. According as we respect our own freedom or deny it, we build on the Rock or on the Sand.

THIS necessity of trusting the actual testimony of the natural faculties according to their present condition, resolves itself, in an earnest mind, into a *reliance on that immutable Constitution of the Soul, whereof these faculties are the expression* ; that whereby it knows, judges, loves, prays ; that which alone makes Life and Death, God and Man, Nature and Book and Church in any sense realities. Behind this we cannot go. God must speak to us through its conditions, or not at all : else we must cease to be men and women before we can hear our Father's voice. We must confide in this, not as we do in the eye and the ear, not even as we do in the uniformity of physical Nature, but more implicitly and profoundly ; because it is on the fidelity of *its* testimony alone that this evidence of the senses rests. It is nearer than the senses. It is our very being, not our work. It is God's perpetual Creation : its laws the brightness of His everlasting Light : its immortal faculties the Image of His Goodness : its essential needs the clear calls of His Holy Spirit : its aspirations the affinities which prove that He has made us for Himself.

The imperfect degree in which we may, as individuals, appreciate this Constitution of our Nature does not prove that we must seek elsewhere for a foundation of certitude : since other foundation there is none, whether supernatural or preternatural. It proves that we must make our appreciation of it deeper and fuller by every means of spiritual culture which our times afford. We are to see to it that none of these faculties on whose free and natural growth all certainty must depend, is suppressed, defrauded, or enslaved. We must see that they are respected, as the legitimate organs of inspiration. Only as we know their laws, experience their organic needs, trust their best aspirations, can anything divine find response within us. In this sense it was said that only the pure in heart shall see God. It is not the acceptance of a book or a person as supernatural that shall make us pure ; but reverently to search out and fearlessly to follow every spiritual need. Our vision is not purged nor our faith assured by the mere knowledge of what was said or done or beheld of old, but by recognising and meeting every fresh demand of mind, conscience and will, awakened through present light and opportunity.

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Consciousness. But he really relies on the sure authority of the Spiritual Constitution only when he impartially and freely unfolds its natural faculties *as the source of all religious knowledge concerning God and Man.*

Now this is precisely what the traditional Theologies, in all their varieties, forbid. Their error is not in insisting on implicit faith. This is the necessity of the Religious Sentiment. Just as it is the first condition of physical life that we trust the evidence of the senses, and of intellectual that we trust the soundness of the intellectual faculties, *so it is the first necessity of spiritual life that we put implicit faith in the soundness of the Spiritual Organization of Man.* The error of the traditional Theologies is that they insist on implicit faith not in this, but in something outside of this, something which in the name of a higher authority than it is believed to possess, outrages and enslaves it. Their theory is that our Spiritual Nature is, in one sense or another, incapable of seeing or of guaranteeing truth:—either altogether unworthy of credence, the view of the Evangelical sects; or else inadequate to serve as sole authority in spiritual things, the view of the Liberal sects. A Supernatural Revelation, involving of course a supernatural tradition, in either case becomes necessary. How this, supposing it possible, is to give us absolute truth when the organs through which each mind is to receive it are incapable of accrediting it, does not appear. If, on the other hand, they *are* capable of accrediting truth, we manifestly want no other than natural sight to give us positive knowledge.

There is but one confession on which a supernaturalist can consistently stand; and it just amounts to final annihilation of confidence between Man and his Maker. It is this. The spiritual organization is a failure. It has to be condemned and set aside; the truth is not in it, and a new name has to be invented for the new power by which our Nature is to be supplanted. Here then is properly the end of all religious trust. For how do we know but the new nature will cheat us like the old?—But the supernaturalist explains himself further. He is bound to insist that the natural faculties are in natural antagonism, and their freedom is their inevitable strife and mutual destruction. Reason is an enemy in the household, and must either be expelled by Faith or else contradicted till it confesses itself a natural fool and fit only to remain such. Faith without evidence or against evidence, faith against the familiar laws of reason, faith a *substitute* for reason, in one form or another, acknowledged or disguised,—this then is the authority introduced in place of a natural confidence in the Spiritual Constitution, and the perpetual inspiration of its laws.

What, it may well be asked, can we possibly gain by assuming a natural contradiction in the operation of those forces in which we live, and move, and have our being? What do we not lose when we charge the Indwelling God with foolishness, and would secede from the jurisdiction of laws whereof Sinai gave but a feeble echo, and Olivet even told not all the grandeur?

We affirm that God binds the human faculties in sweetest brotherhood. He made a white ray of many blended colors, and bade us see by it our way to blessedness, and climb by its gradual ascents, knowledge beyond knowledge, love beyond love, forever. He pronounces it forever good, and forbids that we who did not make, should mar it by suppressing one of those blended rays. Sin never spoiled His original intent, nor inverted the structure He set on the foundations of liberty and love. Apostacy never forfeited for any human faculty the claim to essential confidence and freest culture. If it has done so, nothing can reinstate us; we stand in no vital and reliable relation to Truth; we are unsubstantial as shifting shadows, and protean as dreams. In the trustworthiness of Reason is founded the possibility of reaching Truth. If the eye be unreliable, the whole body shall be full of darkness. I do not forget that the understanding has its limits, and requires to be supplemented by the further evidences of Faith. But this, *in the sense already explained in this discourse*, is a perfectly natural and rational relation. The doctrine I oppose affirms natural relations to be inadequate and mutually destructive. The essence of Supernaturalism is to affirm *an antagonism in Human Nature*, reconcilable only by special interference from without. What God has joined it thus pretends to put asunder even in His Name.

The first divorce it insists on effecting is between Reason and Faith. And the reply we make is that a true postulate of Faith cannot possibly be contrary to Natural Reason, nor even to the understanding naturally applied. It may be unfathomable by the understanding: it may require a heartier and more vital glow of appreciation than can be accorded even by the Transcendental Reason: but that can be neither reason nor understanding which denies it. Nor can that be genuine Faith which insults these by demanding the acceptance of things naturally irrational and impossible in the name of Supernatural Revelation.

And this divorce between Reason and Faith is but a side-crack of that essential gulf which the Supernaturalist puts between God and Man. With more or less consistency he reasons upon the premiss that Human Nature is apart from God, and even against God. Man is here, God there; and his impossible task is to bridge the gulf: im-

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possible, because to separate Man from God, is to annihilate Man. All our possibility not of Religion only, but of Being, rests on the Presence of God *in* Man as the Law and the Life of his Spiritual Organization ; not its inalienable integrity only, but its continued existence even, being inconceivable without a divine impartation. Fitly might we say, that the war of a consistent Supernaturalism against Human Nature is a war to the death. Its confessed purpose indeed is to strip the Human of all good, that the glory of the Divine, *as distinct from the Human*, may be the greater in saving it. As if it were possible or desirable to save that from which all good either has been or can be subtracted ; nay, as if that which is emptied of good were not also thereby emptied of being.

The divorces between God and Man, Reason and Faith, are followed by others between the Nature of Man and the Nature of Jesus as his Saviour *ab-extra*, and between the Bible and all other books. Of course Jesus and the Bible must be made as different as possible from a Godless Human Nature, as distinct as God Himself, or they cannot be divine. That necessity of a superhuman 'Christ,' and a supernatural Bible, and a machinery of miracles and prophecies for the attestation thereof, which in some form or other, directly or by implication, is asserted in all the recognized creeds, goes back, as to its principle, to this same disparagement of the natural constitution of the Soul. It points directly to the monstrous fiction of a race cut off from God, whose nature is incapable of finding and authenticating truth. The belief in an official Mediator, through whom alone Man derives assured and saving knowledge of God — in whatever liberalized form it may exist, and however it may deny the parentage, can find no logical premiss short of that frightful dogmatic gulf, which has no bottom, and which no bridge can span. These expedients of supernaturalistic doctrine cannot cross the abyss thus posited, between Godlessness and God. There is no possibility of spiritual mechanism that shall unite Absolute Yea and Absolute Nay.

There is no such gulf to span, and can be none. God is with Man, and the Bibles and 'Saviours' are but helps to the recognition of the fact. They can be so only on condition that their nature is identical with ours, that they are noble expressions thereof, and show its self-recovering sanity, its natural inspiration. They must bear witness for and not against Nature, and prove the Spiritual Constitution not untrustworthy, but divine.

The God in Jesus appeals to the God in every one, as deep to deep. He could not be in Jesus, if he were not in Humanity, in every member thereof, behind the rude stunted faculties, beyond the mournful

delusions, beyond the sin, as the immanent indefeasible Light and Life. Do you say it is this very Indwelling Light that makes you sure Jesus is the supernatural Way of Life? Look a little deeper. Is not He who can teach you that, Himself a nearer way? And why should He who can teach and assure you in the highest matters *through your nature*, resort to other ways of access, even were it possible to do so? Frankly accept the fact too that all Inspiration of the Bible is conditioned on that of the Human Mind, which interprets it, and that no truth can become divine by reason of its being recorded therein. What is divine there is so because of its own nature, and it is divine to us because the nature of the Soul fits it to recognize the Divine as of like substance with itself. Truth, Justice, Love were first holy in Man before the Bible was writ, or no man could have recognized them in the Bible, nor would the Bible ever have contained them. They will be dear and awful to his Soul long after all words as yet written shall have dwindled before the grandeur of his destiny.

So then it is to this, that, after all devices and dreams of Infallible Masters, we must come back. We can easily prove to the worshipper of 'Supernatural' Authority,—whether in the Bible, the Church, the Miracle or the Christ—who fears to trust in his own moral, intellectual, spiritual nature as such, that he has never in his life had any other ultimate foundation to rest on than this very "Naturalism" he dreads and decries. All we here ask in the name of Natural Religion is that he shall *accept and honor* that whereby alone he can behold God and find Eternal Life.

NOT IN WORD.*

BY W. H. FURNESS.

"THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS NOT IN WORD, BUT IN POWER."—I Cor. iv: 20.

THIS is so obvious, my friends, it is so plain that profession is nothing without practice, that it is not what is said, but personal force, which is of value in religion, that it seems hardly worth while to cite these words of Paul, or, at least to dwell upon them at any length. If we are in danger of mistaking the word for the thing, and the authority of an Apostle be required to save us from the mistake, it would be enough, one would think, just to hint at the apostolic declaration. But we ought not to be in any

* A Discourse preached during the Session of the Episcopal Convention, in Philadelphia, October, 1865.

danger of making this mistake. It is high time that we were beyond it altogether. Little children, perhaps, may still be liable to give undue weight to words, with no experience of the world or of human nature; and with their characteristic facility of faith, it is not to be accounted very wonderful if they suffer themselves to be imposed upon, and deluded into believing, that the glorious kingdom of God is in word. But that grown up, intelligent, cultivated people, in this period of the world's history, here and now especially, after the searching experience which we have just passed through, should be found magnifying the word, the letter, as if it were all in all, and everything else on earth and in heaven, every feeling of patriotism, every dictate of justice and humanity, the sacred, fundamental, eternal, distinctions of right and wrong, were to be sacrificed to it, almost passes belief, though the fact stands visible right before our eyes. It is apparent that, self-evident as is the declaration of Paul, there is hardly the slightest surmise of its meaning. Were it the profoundest proposition of philosophy, nay, if it were expressed in an unknown tongue, people could hardly seem to be less aware of its significance.

The kingdom of God then, be it known, is not in one word or in any number of words; not in words spoken, though they be articulated with the utmost solemnity, and repeated in the most sanctimonious tones, and under the most imposing formalities every first day of the week, or never so many times every day, year in and year out, from the cradle to the grave; yes, and though they first fell fresh and burning from the lips of inspiration, and have been sung by generation after generation, and have built themselves into churches and cathedrals without number, and have got themselves printed millions of times over, the kingdom of God is not in *them*.

Here is a truth which it seems we have not yet attained unto, a primary lesson yet to be learned. The word is not the thing, but only the sign of the thing. And all signs are symbols, be they articulate sounds, or printed characters in Prayer books and Bibles, or be they genuflections, baptisms, sacraments, creeds, liturgies, are only words. They are not the thought, the life, the power, but only the language in which thought, life, power tries to express itself. The letter of all books of the Bible with the rest, is one thing, the spirit, another. The forms of thought and worship of all denominations over all the face of the earth, of all and every one are one thing, and be they ever so true, the kingdom is not in them. They are the feeble, inadequate, outward signs.

The truth is, such is our infirmity, we are continually putting the signs in the place of the thing signified, mistaking the finite word for the infinite power, the definition for the indefinable.

And we all know how this happens. At the first glimmering of intelligence, the child observes those to whom he looks up as to God, repeating certain forms of speech with great seriousness of tone and manner, maintaining, in short, a certain form of Religion so called: and long, long before he is capable of so much as a conjecture of what it all means, he has learned to connect with this proceeding a feeling of awe, a sense of sacredness, and all his best affections gather round it. A thousand influences are at work

to prepossess his mind with an exaggerated idea of the importance of that form, that *word*, with which he has thus become acquainted. It matters nothing to him, as to his attachment to it, whether he have any rational understanding of it or not, whether or not it suggest any idea to him. It affects him, not through what it specially and theologically signifies, but through his filial love, his home affections; and soon through the mighty force of habit. And every man that lives, loves to do as he is accustomed to do, and hates to do differently.

Thus it is that men are found everywhere clinging to forms of faith, so called, with which they are connected by no rational tie whatever, by nothing partaking in the slightest degree of intelligent personal conviction. It is all a matter of feeling and mere use and want. They have not what deserves to be called a thought about it. They never inquire, never dream of asking what it signifies. Thus it is that forms of Religion kill or stifle, or crystalize the sensibility, the intelligence of men, and then keep their place in the world, not by any authority of right reason, not by virtue of any significance that they possess. That has perished out of them, gone to dust long ago, leaving them empty shells, and mouldering shells too. But men have become attached to them, and used to them, and have made them their religion. And this is so much easier than thinking and deciding, every man for himself, and incurring all sorts of perplexities in consequence, that these empty hulls, this religion of words and phrases, is all the more ardently cherished, and it has come to pass, that one of the chief attractions of some churches that we know of is, that they offer a retreat, picturesque and profound, from all mental conflicts and difficulties, where the soul is lulled to sleep with a musical monotone, and need never trouble itself with politics or religion.

Such is the way in which men come to see and to persist in seeing the kingdom of God in words, in a name; in fine, in the Church, which at the best, is a dim symbol of things which can never be expressed in words.

If there be any quarter, one would think, to which all the world's best interests, when they are imperilled, might look with confidence for prompt, vigorous, effectual aid, it is to the churches, to the Religion of the land; for it is obviously and indisputably the office and aim of religion, of the Christian religion at all events, to make men humane, just, hearty lovers and servants of whatever tends to alleviate the miseries of men, and to help human progress. Of what earthly use is it, if it does not do this?

But, strange to see and to say, as it is organized into denominations and churches, it is always found doggedly standing right in the light of the soul, as if that were its position appointed by Providence, never lifting a finger to break any chain, or ejaculating a "thank God" when any chain is broken.

And why is it so? Whence this monstrous perversion? Whence but from the infatuation of which I speak. People are besotted with the fancy that the kingdom of God is in word, in some symbol of doctrine, some mode of worship, in this or that ecclesiastical organization, which has taken shape in brick, brownstone, and granite, in personal titles, in liturgies, rubrics and canons, and black gowns and white, all covered with such sanctity as time

weaves over them, all decorated with the attractions of wealth, fashion and numbers. The maintainance of some structure of this sort — which if it is good for anything it is only as a scaffolding—the support of such a structure is made the prime concern, transcending all other interests, the veritable kingdom of God. Nothing is to be countenanced, no truth, though it were to come straight down from the eternal heavens, that threatens or appears to threaten its stability. The winds must not blow, the law of gravitation must be denounced, if it endanger the peace of the Church. The most horrible oppression that the world has ever witnessed, may stir up the bloodiest of rebellions, and drench a land with the blood of its noblest citizens, and darken thousands of homes with the gloom of the most agonizing bereavements, but no note must be taken of the fact; it must be denied in the face of God himself, if the Church is likely to be disturbed by the acknowledgment of it. Those New York ex-governors, in the Episcopal Convention, did actually deny it in so many words, that slavery had anything to do with our late trouble, except incidentally. Why did they not deny that there had been any slavery in the land—any Rebellion? They might as well. But I suppose they would concede that there was a divine institution here designed for the christianizing of the African race. Justice, simple, natural justice, the application of the vital principle of the New Testament, the deliverance of millions from the yoke of bondage, must all be stigmatised as worldly politics, branded as irreligion, to be shunned and abhorred, sooner than the sanctity of the letter, the peace of an idolized Church, should be infringed.

It is humiliating to witness this thing. It cries shame, I say not upon our religion, but upon the common intelligence of mankind.

But although it is just at this moment showing itself in an aggravated form, it is not peculiar to any one denomination, remember. We are all in danger of magnifying our word, and thinking the Kingdom of God is in it, and fancying all outside of it, outlaws and outcasts. Attaching an undue worth to our peculiar forms, we shrink from speaking out our honest thought. We temporize and suppress the conviction of truth, lest our Church lose ground. There is, among the recognized and established denominations, hardly a simpler word than Unitarianism; and yet how often have its professors shrunk from plain truth, for fear of making the liberal Church still more unpopular than it is! Did we not cast out Theodore Parker from our communion, because in word he differed from us, while in power—in power in which the true Kingdom of God is—he went far before us all? Not that his honesty and ability and devotedness—in one word, his power was ever called in question. That was seen and known of all men, but then his word was accounted dangerous to the peace and security of our word. The most liberal, the simplest modes of religion so called, are, not indeed as much (matters would be desperate if they were,) but they are as truly, liable as the most orthodox, to exaggerate the value of mere words; to beguile people into so magnifying an organization, that they will be ready to suppress thoughts however true, and discourage measures, however wise and humane, that threaten to disturb it.

And this concern for our house of cards, the little castle of words and forms that we have built up, and in which we bring ourselves to believe that the interests of the Universe, the regalia of the divine kingdom, are preserved — into what rank cowardice does it grow! I have no doubt that in this Episcopal Convention, which is making such an exhibition of itself in the eyes of grown up men and women, if every man would speak out plainly his own mind, and be simply true to himself, those who are unwilling that the Church should thank God that the wicked cause of the Rebellion is abolished, so far from being in a majority of two to one, would be reduced to a despicable minority. My respect for the common intelligence of human nature forbids me to think otherwise.

But intelligence, common sense and common feeling — everything was paralyzed by the one apprehension, the one fear for the prosperity of their sect. We have witnessed the same thing over and over again in this our day. What has been more common, in times which the memory of the oldest among us is not taxed to remember, than to hear one and another protest: "Such and such things do not disturb *me*. I can listen to them with perfect composure. But then there are those among us, in our Church, whom they do excite, and if these things are said and urged, it will make trouble!" And this ground has often times been taken by so many — so many have insisted that *they* do not condemn unpalatable truth, that it has been a puzzle to find out who they are, and where they are, on whose account such numbers are so solicitous. I cannot but think that most of those who helped to swell that most miserable vote in the Convention the other day, were and are most heartily thankful that an end has come to the "sum of all villainies;" but then there floated before their minds the vision of the Episcopal Church all over the South, and of the thousands who would be offended and enraged by any condemnatory allusion to the God and man-defying iniquity, in behalf of which they wilfully and deliberately plunged the nation into a most bloody war; and then the Church would be split in two. The Church, the Church, the hollow Word — this is their weakness, their infatuation.

Their Church is a splendid affair, as churches go — not up to the Roman Catholic to be sure, but quite a loud sounding word, and musical withal. What with its numbers, and fashion, and wealth, and costly edifices dotting the land, it certainly makes a show and noise, but, judged by the proceeding of this convention, it has no more life, human life in it, than any other castle of clouds.

The good which is to result from the conduct of this Convention is that all must see that the Kingdom of God is not in word. The lesson needs constant reiteration. I think it is having its effect among all intelligent men. We shall get the truth by heart, by and by.

The Kingdom of God is in power, in the divine force of justice and humanity, in the power of that generous patriotism which just now inspired thousands to offer themselves willing sacrifices to wounds and cruel imprisonment, and bloody death, for the sake of their country and the large liberty which this country represents as no other has ever done; in the power of that humane sentiment, which prompted the people to pour out their wealth

like water, to mitigate the suffering and horrors of war, and which made no difference between loyalist and rebel, but accounted both brothers when they lay bleeding on the same battle-field; in the power of that sympathy which has been set flowing, and which I trust in God is to grow every day deeper and broader, submerging the prejudices of race and the distinction of color, and swelling onward to lift up the long oppressed to a full participation in the royal prerogatives of our sacred nature. Here it is, in these things, that the moral government of the world, the descent of the Holy Ghost, the coming of Christ, the glorious Kingdom of God, has been made manifest, as seldom before, since the foundation of the world.

How many millions of times during the war, was the prayer repeated by young and old, morning and night, in churches and in our homes: "Our Father who art in Heaven, Hallowed be thy name! *Thy kingdom come!*" But the prayer was only a word. The Kingdom of God was not in it! The Kingdom of God in it! Why it has been repeated without a thought, letting alone the Kingdom of God. Men, having eyes to see, and ears to hear, claiming to be Masters in Israel, have caught not one ray of the light which has streamed down from the Kingdom of God into the hut of the slave; they have not heard the faintest whisper of the angel-harmonies that announce the advent of a new era. And now that the bloody struggle has ended in the triumph of the country, and of Freedom, they find nothing to thank Heaven for in the abolition of the foulest wrong that ever afflicted mankind, and which alone nerved the parricidal arms that were lifted against our native land. Come, Kingdom of Light, and scatter this darkness, we pray.

How preposterous is it for any religious denomination, any Church, ever to think of justifying its insensibility to the rights and wrongs of mankind by pleading that it has nothing to do with politics! With politics so called, vitally implicating the comfort, the security, the peace and happiness of nations, every Church has to do, and cannot help having to do with them. When these interests are agitating the whole body politic, the question, the only question possible in the nature of things, which every Church is compelled to settle, and which it can by no possibility escape, is: Will it take sides with Justice and Liberty, or against these most religious interests of the world? If it decides to stand dumb before it—if it shuts its eyes and refuses to look at it—if it keeps its lips tightly closed and refuses to speak to it, why then its silence speaks, and no man can mistake the import of that; and the upholders of wrong take refuge and fortify themselves under the authority of that silence, and cry, "Since the Church, since Religion, does not rebuke us, who is he that condemneth?" Who will venture to affirm that the great Episcopal Church, so far as it is to be understood by its official action, is to be ranked on the side of the country and its Free Institutions? Who questions where it stands politically? It might as well have spoken at once outright for slavery, and for the Rebellion. Its refusal to speak is more telling than any words. Thus in making the impossible attempt to avoid meddling with politics, it has plunged into them

overhead. It is found exerting a political influence which will harm nothing so much as its own evangelical character and prospects.

Happily, we all know too many loyal men and women of that denomination — too many of its members, who are ranged on the side of Freedom, to be compelled to consider this official vote as representing the body of that Communion. Thank God! we are not forced to rest in any such conclusion.

My friends, seeing what we see, how prone men are to exalt the sign to the entire forgetfulness of the thing signified, are we not excusable if our dread of anything like an ecclesiastical organization of the liberally disposed, is in danger of running into excess? With the experience of the last thirty years, with all that is now passing before our eyes, I do most cordially mistrust everything of the sort. It doubtless promotes the growth of a sect, helps it to flourish; namely, to build Churches, and accomplish all its denominational measures, but let people become active and interested in organizing, and inevitably they magnify their little method, and see the Kingdom of God only there; or if they still see it elsewhere, yet the capitol of the kingdom is within their nominal precincts. So far as the agency of the churches has been concerned in bringing about this day of promise, where is the sect, orthodox or liberal, that has not, as such at least, stood aloof, and by standing aloof, obstructed the progress of Freedom? It is outside of the Church, outside the associated action of religious bodies, that the power has arisen which has wrought this great change. So it always has been. Not in the Temple at Jerusalem and from among the Jewish doctors of divinity and law, but in the far off, mean Nazareth, is it that the brightest light that has ever broken upon the world from the evercoming kingdom, dawned; and no clerical dignity attached to the person of him who brought that light, but he was dragged away, heaped with imprecations as an irreligious man and blasphemer. That no flesh may boast in the divine presence, and as if to show the folly of human wisdom, it is always in some low, dark place, in some unthought of quarter, where no time-honored associations gather to invest it, that the truth, which is the power of God to the salvation of men, first appears. Keep eye and heart open. Watch, for at times and in places that we think not of, the great Kingdom comes. Let no forms of words or of thought so hedge us round and absorb our attention that we cannot see the truth as it is laying the foundations, broad and deep, of the eternal empire of God. Let no word of ours so fill our ears and prepossess our minds that we cannot hear the still, small, angel voices speaking — perhaps in a new tongue, but intelligible to every free and earnest soul, as they announce the royal coming. Fond and endearing as the ties are that bind us to the word of our childhood and our fathers, nothing surpasses, nothing can approach, the exceeding beauty and blessedness of God's own truth. Inexhaustible are its inspirations, all purifying is its influence, almighty to guide, to guard, to console.

"The true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world."

John, i: 9.

IN Israel's fane, the Priest of old
In glowing mitre sought the shrine ;
His ephod's broad, empurpled fold,
With cunning work embroidered fine.
In azure vest
Of byssus dressed,
Besprent with golden clasp and gem ;
And censer swung
And fumed, and rung
The bells of gold that fringed his hem.

But chief, above his heart was bound
The jewelled breast-plate, folded square ;
And oft — or so the tale — 't was found
The "Elohim" descended there.
For beryl bright,
And chrysolite,
And sardines flushed like dawn, oft poured
With fiery ray !
And Aaron aye
"Bore judgment" thus before the Lord.

Thee, Man of Now, no hand hath graced
With Aaron's breast-plate, God-controlled ;
Yet on thy heart is "judgment" placed,
Not less than on the priest of old.
From emerald's lip,
And sapphire's deep,
No tinted gush of God-sent might !
But from thy *soul*
Abroad doth roll
Such holy force and fall of light !

From thine — from all ! the bigot's hedge,
Where God would have unbroken meads,
Hath parcelled off. With thorough edge
We cut the pales that part the creeds.
Each Pagan scheme,
Great Truth, we deem

The Radical.

Some lisp of thee, not Folly's lie ;
 Like plot o'erlaid
 Too thick with shade,
 Whose healthful crops come scant thereby.

Wild Sybils—who mid grotto dim
 In panting rhapsody do speak,
 Ye Cymric bards, who pour the hymn
 Before your lichen'd altars bleak,
 And Guebre saint,
 Whose soul doth faint,
 While Sirius bands his troop of stars,
 And Priest who turns
 From brimming urns
 Libation pure to Jove or Mars,—

God's crude and green-hewn torches ye !
 That foul his flame with drift of smoke,
 That show his ray but glimmeringly ;
 Yet nought avails the light to choke.
 The frenzied dance,
 The mystic Chants,
 The saga screamed through wintry wood
 By Odin's child,—
 All, worship wild !
 All, broken homage of the Good !

O stream ! for whose so plenteous tide,
 Old Aaron's gems poor conduits are ;
 Most sweet ! indeed thy bounty wide
 Sent full through zones and cycles far,
 Doth David bless,
 And Pythoness,
 And prophet hoar, and all but thou :
 The mellow'r gush,
 And holier rush
 Hast in thy heart, O Man of Now !

J. K. HOSMER.

DO MEN NEED SALVATION?

BY C. K. WHIPPLE.

WHAT is "Salvation?"

Unless we have an accurate idea of what it is, we cannot talk or think understandingly about it.

The Church's earliest direction to those who are outside its pale is to attend first, and most earnestly, and above all things else, to the saving of their souls.

How comes it that their souls need to be saved?

The Church answers, "Because they are lost, *lost*, LOST."

From what do they need to be saved?

The Church answers, "From hell, from eternal fire, the inevitable doom of all who are not *saved*."

Looking further into the matter, we find it maintained by the Church that this "hell" and this awful "doom" have been established by God. Inquiring further about God, we learn from the Church that he is the Creator of all men, and thus their Father; and that he practically shows himself their Father to this extent, namely, he takes providential care of them in this world, and gives each of them a chance to be "saved" from the hell which he himself has established beyond the grave, and provides eternal happiness for such as *are* "saved," remaining truly *their* Father forever; but that to the immense number of persons who are not "saved" he ceases to be a Father as soon as their bodies die, and acts toward them with dreadful severity, precisely as their worst enemy would do, thenceforth, forever.

All this is really the doctrine taught by an immense majority, say ninety-nine in a hundred, of all the Churches in the world that call themselves Christian. That which is above described is what all the clergy of these churches teach, and what all the attendants on them receive, as the meaning of the word "salvation."

In this country, where *true* Christianity and reason have made more progress, the proportion is less. Perhaps only nineteen in twenty of the churches that call themselves Christian teach this horrible doctrine. But this is still an immense majority. And all the clergy of these churches teach as true, and all the attendants on them receive as true, that which is above described as the meaning of the word "salvation."

What is to be said of the representation thus made by the churches?

If we look at it in the light of that reason which the *true* God, the *real* Father, gave to be our guide, and in the light of those sympathies and affections which He, the dear Father, has implanted in the heart of each one of us, we shall be constrained, by the force of truth, to take the following positions, namely:—

The assumptions upon which this Church idea of "salvation" stands are a mass of falsehood. Of course, a proportion of undeniable truth is mixed with it in the teaching; of course, things obviously true are skilfully warped so as to appear to support the falsehood; but the dogmatic assump-

tions upon which this hypothesis called "salvation" is reared, are thoroughly and absolutely false.

1. God is *not* the odious mixture of good and evil that this scheme represents Him. He is the genuine Father and Mother of each individual of the human race, caring for each with all the wisdom and all the tenderness belonging to those relations, and extending that wise supervision and tender help through the whole existence of each. Consequently—

2. Man is *not* "lost." He is as much within God's power, and under His protecting Fatherly care, as on the first day of his creation. He has never been beyond that power or severed from that care. He is just where God expected and intended him to be, in the first stage of an immense and beneficent system of education. In other words—God, the all-wise and all-powerful, has *not* been overpowered or outwitted by any hostile being in the execution of the beneficent purposes which we must suppose Him originally to have had in the creation of man. Consequently—

3. There is no need, there was never any need, of a "Plan of Salvation" for man and of course, there never *was* any such supplementary "Plan" in God's economy. The original purpose of the Infinite Father still holds. It *never* "repented Him that He had made man." The Allwise saw from the beginning all the experimental trials among good and evil, that His children would make in the course of their education; and their temporary choice of evil is so far from surprising or disconcerting Him, with whom a thousand years are as one day, that He has made the results of such choice eminently useful in their education. Since then, nothing has occurred to disturb God's original purpose of progressive providential education for men, it further follows that—

4. God has never established any such horrible thing as that which the Church calls "Hell;" unspeakably horrible, whether it be imagined a *place* of never-ending bodily torment, as the Church generally teaches—or a *state* of never-ending spiritual suffering, as Henry Ward Beecher teaches. Not only would it be a libel on the Father to suppose never-ending evil or never-ending suffering a part of His purpose, but there is no reason whatever to suppose the necessity or the existence of any such thing, whether place or state. The idea originated in times of comparative ignorance; it has been continued and perpetuated, partly by men who were base enough to make their living out of the fears inspired in the community by the supposition of its truth, and partly by the well meaning dupes of such men; and it is now used by the clergy to *drive* into their net those who cannot be otherwise *drawn* into it.

These things being so, we are assured that, there being no such thing in existence as that which the Church calls "Hell," there is no such thing needful to man as that which the Church calls "salvation." Of course I use the term in the Church's meaning, which is the meaning accepted among the Church's pupils, otherwise called the Christian world; for all the Catholics, all the Greek Church, and an immense majority of the Protestants, accept and believe this hypothesis about salvation.

Now, the intelligent Christian does not believe in the Minotaurish being,

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half Father and half tyrant, that the Church puts in the place of the true God. He believes in the Perfect Being who is the true Father and Friend to every man, as much after the death of his body as before it. He believes that God's original plan continues, and will continue, to work with prosperous beneficence, never having so failed or come short as to make an amendment, a plan of salvation, necessary. Why then should he use that damaged phraseology? Why, wishing to teach the truth, does he continue to use the word that is founded on a group of falsehoods, and that conveys to ninety-nine in every hundred of those who hear it the false idea preached everywhere by the Church? Should not all of us who worship a God of love do better to dispense with the word "salvation," and use some expression which shall convey our meaning without at the same time conveying a meaning different from ours?

We, children of the Heavenly Father—in virtue of our humanity, undoubtedly His children—and His children no less, even if we are prodigal sons—we do not need salvation. We have no more need of a contrivance to escape from hell than from purgatory. The idea of the necessity of attempting such an escape, and the methods of accomplishing it, would only divert us from the real work which God has set before us in this world, the progressive improvement of ourselves and our fellow-men. This is evidently God's plan, the education of His children in wisdom and goodness; and our business in this world is to be workers together with Him.

We are now in God's primary school. Our duty in it is to do its work faithfully, day by day; not to spend our time in speculating as to what our positions will be in the grammar school, and the high school, and the college, and in such other departments of instruction and discipline as are yet to come. A very moderate allowance of faith would teach us that he, the Superintending Father, will provide for that; and a moderate exercise of reason ought to teach us that faithful attention to the duties of this department is the very preparation needed, and the best preparation possible, for entrance upon the next. Let us love God, trust him, and work with him in the effort to improve ourselves and others. This is the whole duty of man.

But it will be asked me—Do you leave out of consideration the ugly fact of sin? the fact that many of us often, and all of us sometimes, are accustomed to work not with God, but against him?

I answer, I do not forget or disregard this fact. Every teacher of a primary school knows that no scholar is perfect, that some are wilfully disobedient, and that some *persist* in wilful disobedience. Of course this state of things is to be provided for.

Our teachers, too, are imperfect as well as their children. Some try one method, some another, for overcoming the evils of disobedience. Some have more success, others less. None of them are wicked enough to burn the unruly scholar alive, as the Church makes its God do with *his* refractory pupils; but being limited in power, and wisdom, and time, they are sometimes obliged to yield to the difficulties of the situation, and to turn the bad boy out of school. What I claim for the true God, the loving Father, is, that being *unlimited* in power, and wisdom, and time, the diffi-

culties of the situation are never too great for Him. He will accomplish His benevolent purposes in regard to the ultimate holiness and happiness of men without a single failure. Sooner or later, He will succeed in persuading every sinner voluntarily to turn from sin and to choose righteousness. Is not this plan better than the one which, (though called a "plan of salvation") provides for a hell of blasphemers to be eternally roasting, or a hell of sufferers eternally agonized by unavailing remorse? I say that our God is higher, nobler, more worthy of veneration, affection and obedience than the Church's God. He will *not* laugh at the sinner's calamity, and mock when his fear cometh. He will encourage and accept repentance and the attempt at amendment in the next world, and the next, and the next, no less than in the present one. He is to be loved and honored because he is obviously *worthy* of love and honor.

This is the way in which God deals with sin. But how are *we* to deal with it in ourselves? Each of us is conscious of yielding to temptation, of doing wrong actions, of indulging evil affections, of choosing for the time, something opposite to God and goodness. Now, even if there be no hell existing, and no salvation from it needed, do we not need a mediator to reconcile us to God, and an atonement to wash away our sin?

I answer, we do not need either. Though we may have been alienated from God, God is never alienated from us. He is always ready and glad to welcome the repentant sinner. Whoever is sincerely trying to cease to do evil and learn to do well has God already on his side. What men need is to be assured of this fact, and thus to be encouraged never to give up striving for self-improvement. Error and sin are to be expected of human frailty. When a man does wrong again, after repenting and reforming, "no strange thing has happened to him." He has repeated the experience of all men, even the best, that have gone before him. It is the invariable lot of humanity. I say this not by way of excuse, least of all as suggesting indifference or easy assent to the repetition of sin, but as recognizing a fact in human life and human character. This verse states the fact and gives the remedy:

"The wisest have been fools,
The surest stumbled sore;
Strive thou to stand; or, fallen, arise!
I ask thee not for more."

What we need is to recognize the fact that every sin is an act of folly as well as of wickedness, to turn from it with hearty repentance, to make such amendment to any wronged fellow-man as the case admits of, and to watch, and pray, and strive against a repetition of the sin. If you fail again, be not discouraged, but still try. Try, and keep trying, and never cease trying, to avoid the things you know to be wrong, and to do the things you know to be right. This is the whole duty of man. The religious teacher can teach this just as easily, and can make it just as clear to his pupil, as what he now teaches about putting trust in a mediator. The pupil can make the effort of offering his sincere penitence to the Father, the Being against whom he has

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sinned, and to whom he wishes to return, as easily as to a mediator. This is the *right* course, and it has the further advantage of being a direct, instead of a circuitous course.

As to the pretended need of a mediator, is there any one nearer to a father than his child? Did the Prodigal Son need a mediator? Jesus teaches us in that beautiful parable *how* to go to God, namely, in person, and not by deputy. The Prodigal Son would have committed a new error if he had applied to the obedient elder brother, or to anybody else in the universe, to intercede for him. His application directly to the father is the best proof of the sincerity of his love and the heartiness of his obedience. And the Father so receives it. He asks no atonement, no sacrifice, no process of purification following the return and confession. The act of returning in penitence *was* the purification. And the Father, who had been ready every day and hour since his son's departure to welcome his return in this same manner, says immediately, "Bring forth the best robe and put it on him." He is again and at once a *son*, with all the rights and privileges of that relation, according to the instruction that Jesus himself gives us.

I conclude then, judging from the highest estimate that we can form of the character and purposes of God, and from a reasonable view of the nature and the destiny of men, that we do not need the thing which the Church calls "salvation;" and that we can spend our time much better than in thinking of it or striving for it. God has made men for progressive improvement in wisdom and goodness. By striving for these ends we shall be working together with Him.

THE LORD'S SUPPER.

FOURTH PAPER.—ITS ABANDONMENT.

WE have sketched in the preceding papers the sad history of the Lord's Supper; its touchingly beautiful origin, in an upper room, where at the Passover Supper, sat Jesus and the twelve; its simple and childlike, its social and happy observance in the churches of the Apostles: its separation into two antagonistic branches, the Agape and the Eucharist. We have seen the Agape lose its religious character in its conviviality, crowded out of the Church, as it was, by the imposing and mysterious Eucharist. We have seen the Eucharist lose its commemorative, and all its social character, in the stately sacrifice of the Mass. We have seen the attempt of Protestantism to restore the primitive Communion prove unsuccessful on account of a theology entirely unlike that of the Apostles; and, finally, we have seen sects that have renounced the sacrificial theology, and are struggling into a free and rational faith, retaining a form out of which so far as they are concerned, the life has departed — refusing to bury their dead.

But why, it may be asked, may we not, now that we know what it is, re-establish the primitive observance; and, like the Apostles in Jerusalem, or

the disciples in Troas and Corinth, have a real supper, a social, religious meal, in memory of Jesus, and of his last interview with the disciples? There is nothing to hinder any number of persons who choose to do so meeting thus; but let them regard the act as individual, and temporary; let them not imagine they are restoring the primitive "Breaking of bread." The basis of all observance is belief: and is it not certain that we cannot believe quite as the Apostles did? If they did not think and feel humanly, but by miraculous inspiration, then, of course, we cannot expect to share their experience, and if they did think and feel humanly, it is impossible for us to see things in their light, without being set back some 1800 years, and subjected to their surroundings. We might as well hope to realize again the life and opinions of a child, as to enter truly into any ancient theology or religion. It always costs a pang to break the ties that bind us to the outlived and outgrown past; but all the experience of life tells us, that we must hold ourselves ready to do so, and enter, as best we may, the life of the present. The world is full of births and separations, and only by means of them does humanity continue and advance. It is allowable to drop a tear over the departed; but to hold on to that which is no longer ours—

"Is a course
Of impious stubbornness; 't is unmanly grief;
It shows a will most incorrect to heaven."

In the history of the world how often men are called upon to forsake their idols, and cleave only to the living God, and how often do we hear the inconsolable lament of the poor Jew of Mt. Ephraim, whose religious establishment had been robbed by the Danites. "Ye have taken away my gods and the priest, what have I more." It is natural to be disturbed through fear of losing something sacred. Alas, that we Christians should need to be told by pious Mohammedans, that the only place truly sacred, is in the devout heart.

"I hotly strove to reach the race-course goal,
When seeking God beyond myself to find.
But now I see, since He was in my soul,
The first impatient step left Him behind."

At its very best the Communion can be only a means of grace that may be disused without serious loss. I appeal to you who have most keenly enjoyed the suggestions and associations of the Lord's Supper, whether it is there only or chiefly that you experience the kindling and sanctifying influences. Are you not often more deeply touched by music, or by the sight of the grand and beautiful? Is home without its means of grace to you? Is active benevolence and your daily human enterprises altogether profane? If our natural life has not to us its religious side, in vain shall we seek God and good at a ritual service, and if we but use the near and common means of grace, we shall have little occasion for the extraordinary, and the artificial.

It is apt to be thought that if the Communion has become nearly or quite

insignificant, it is at all events innocent, and, therefore, to be let alone, for those to enjoy who find, or imagine they find it to be useful. Against such indifference I feel bound to protest. Institutions are generally useful in their time; out of their time they are always noxious. I say it not without regard to the feelings of others. The Lord's Supper has become among liberal Christians a stumbling-block and a growing evil. All attempts to free it from the sacrificial and funereal character which Evangelical Protestants have given it have proved unavailing. In the more radical societies where great pains have been taken to give it naturalness, and bring it within the range of popular thought, the people persist in regarding it as a rite in which only the few, the pious, should participate, and one which is to be approached only by those who put their shoes from off their feet. Something very mysterious and solemn invests the occasion, and its character cannot be changed without so remodelling it as to make it a new institution. There seems to be an impassible gulf between the Lord's Supper as we know it, and one conducted in such a cheerful, social way that it would be as real as a dinner in honor of a hero or a poet. As it is, it presents an unnatural and forbidding aspect, and is out of all relation to modern life. Such a use of symbols is elsewhere utterly unknown to us. It would, I think, be far enough from Oriental ways; it is certainly foreign to our occidental ideas and habits. If we go through the form because it is commanded, it lacks all grace and worth: and if we do it as an artificial stimulus to our feelings, it is in the long run prejudicial, making them morbid in proportion to its efficiency.

The most serious objection to the ordinance is that it institutes a fictitious separation of the righteous and the wicked. If it were in our power to make a just division between the good and the bad, and to set the one on the right hand, and the other on the left, it would be wicked and inhuman to do so. Both parties would be made to suffer, the bad made worse, through envy and despair, and the good demoralized, through pride and conceit. What then shall we say of a division so evidently, so confessedly fictitious. Do not many of the very best men and women shrink from the Communion table, while some of the most hypocritical and mean spirited, are punctilious in their attendance? I do not speak of exceptional cases. I do not speak hastily, or at random, but of what I have painfully and continually observed, and I confidently assert that the Communion institutes a fictitious separation of the pious and profane. The evident tendency of this, is to bring religion into contempt. It is bad enough to shut the sacred service into a secret corner, when the universe is God's only visible temple, but when the select coterie is as sure to embrace the worst as the best man, the whole thing becomes excessively frivolous and repugnant. Into the Holy of Holies, as the Communion service has come to be regarded, those of a tender conscience will go with reluctance, while the Pharisee steps confidently in. The rite, therefore, both encourages Phariseism, and discourages the "Blessed who are poor in spirit." Independent thinkers will naturally hesitate, or decline to participate in a ceremony so mysterious, and so likely to be superstitious; while the unthinking, who follow leadership with as little

reason as a flock of sheep, will be counted among the elect: and so again the Church award a premium to the least deserving.

Do not say that the doors are opened wide, and in our more liberal churches, the sinners as well as the saints are invited. You know very well who can come and who must stay away. Do not say it is not the Communion's fault, but that of the persons who refuse to participate in it. Is then man made for the service. The only claim that this, or any other form can have upon rational men, is that it meets their wants. It is not enough that a salvation is free, it is a failure if it does not draw men to itself. If the practical effect of the Lord's Supper is to separate men, and even create false distinctions, instead of binding the whole race into a brotherhood, it is sufficiently condemned, no matter how fine may be its theory.

Secular secret societies are always looked upon with suspicion. Sometimes they may render their members more humane, by pointing out particular persons to whom to show kindness. Yet unquestionably a secret society makes artificial, and purely arbitrary distinctions, and it is a question whether it is or not true, that as much more as the members of a fraternity love one another, so much the less they care for those outside of their circle. How manifestly nothing of this kind can be tolerated in religion. One of the most fundamental of religious ideas, is that of the unity and brotherhood of the race. To encourage separations and distinctions, and special regard for special classes, is not only alien, but antagonistic, to Christianity. I cannot give expression to the strength and vehemence of my feeling against the anti-Christian custom. It is enough to hear the members of petty worldly organizations calling this man "Brother" and that one "Mr.," but when the same spirit makes the highest and holiest "profession" in order to pronounce with its "little brief authority" from a self-erected judgment seat, its "Come ye blessed" and "Depart ye cursed" it becomes a rank offence smelling to heaven. It is well known that the Communion is the head and front of this offending. Everywhere it is this service that distinguishes the "professor of religion" from the worldling, and never till this service is abolished, will it be possible for Christians to look upon mankind as a brotherhood.

DANIEL BOWEN.

THE LOST THOUGHT.

Two little clouds were sailing
Over a Summer's sea,
Two little birds were telling
Their loves in a leafy tree:—
I looked,—the clouds had vanished,
The birds far off had flown;
My rising thought was banished,
And I was left alone.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.—HOW I TURNED “PARKER-ITE.”

I.

WHERE I STARTED.

IN boy-hood I was a Webster Whig, and a Huntington Unitarian. Among my earliest memories are the Church and the Sunday School. When I was about ten years old, my little cousin who was spending Sunday with me asked me to lend him my Robinson Crusoe. I indignantly refused his request, and told him that he was a very naughty boy to want to read such books on the Sabbath. We had quite a quarrel over the book, and it was with great difficulty that my mother persuaded me that quarrelling on Sunday was worse than even reading Robinson Crusoe. My own Sunday reading consisted mainly of the Old Testament, and Josephus. I not only believed every word in the Bible, but attached a mystical and magical efficacy to even the long lists of proper names in Chronicles. A sermon of Dr. Wayland's, on the New Jerusalem, fell into my hands when I was about sixteen. I became greatly alarmed for the safety of my soul, and though I gained some comfort from occasionally attending Methodist prayer-meetings, began to fear that I had committed the unpardonable sin. In my terror I fasted, made long prayers, and read the Bible continually. In short, I passed through the whole experience, commonly called by the Orthodox, conversion. At last, I applied for admission to the Church. I told the minister, still a pillar of the faith which Channing, and Buckminster, and Noah Worcester delivered unto him, that, above all other things I desired admission into his Church. Being duly admitted, I believed myself numbered among the elect. About this time, I occasionally heard of Theodore Parker's foolish and blasphemous heresies. One Sunday morning I met a friend of mine, a lady, who invited me to go with her to hear this “Orson of parsons.” “No,” responded my indignant orthodoxy, “I am going to *Church*.”

At this time my religious faith centred in Jesus Christ, and was in effect the exclusive worship of that holy Person. The idea of God, our Father, seemed to me one of secondary importance and value. I had a great deal of mental deference for him who was the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, but I had very little faith in Our Father. I was a firm believer in Endless Misery, in Special Providences, in the Infallibility of Scripture, in the Mediatorial office of Christ, in his Supernatural Authority and Superhuman Character, and in the Mystical Efficacy of his death to secure our salvation. With these views, then, I began to prepare for the ministry, nearly ten years ago. My success in the study of Theology will be narrated in the next chapter.

II.

WHAT I STUDIED.

I began my studies for the ministry with the one subject which was of all engrossing interest to me, the nature and character of Jesus. I devoted all my best time and thought for over a year to this subject. I read the Gos-

pels often, and also the best *lives* of Jesus I could procure. Mr. Huntington recommended those by Furness and Neander. I studied these carefully and arrived, at length, to a very unexpected, and at first, unwelcome result. For I seemed to find that the New Testament taught the perfect and simple humanity of Jesus. I was forced to admit this, but I still clung all the closer to my faith in his miracles, his infallibility, his sinlessness, his mediatorship, and his real and actual presence with every believing soul. I conceived that faith in him was necessary for salvation. The next point I took up was that of Endless Misery, my belief in which doctrine had made me, first anxious for myself, and then scornful towards those whom I thought God had rejected. A fragment of a Universalist newspaper turned my attention to the well-known passages in Paul's epistles. I studied these, and a weight was lifted from my soul. I never had felt so happy in Church before, because I could rejoice in the belief that all my fellow-worshippers would sooner or later be saved. My attention was next turned to the contradictions and improbable statements in the Old Testament. I gave up, as the majority of Unitarians had already done, the notion of the infallibility of this part of the Bible, but I held, perhaps all the faster, to that of the Gospels and Epistles. I now began to fear that my speculations had gone so far as to unfit me for entrance into the Unitarian ministry. Therefore I was much relieved by discovering at one of the A. U. A. meetings, and through the Christian Examiner, that it was possible to be a Unitarian minister and yet a Humanitarian, a Universalist, and a sceptic about some of the Old Testament miracles, and it was the fashion then, before Mr. Parker chased all smiles from Unitarian lips, to smile in a superior way at Balaam's ass and Jonah's whale. Accordingly I entered the Divinity School, and devoted the first two years of my life in Cambridge to the study of the New Testament. I studied the original Greek in the best edition, and with the best commentaries money could buy. I composed elaborate dissertations on the Hebraisms in the New Testament, on the Codex Sinaiticus and similar subjects. Gradually I saw that the difference of the various manuscripts was so great that it was often impossible to decide upon the original text. I found one error after another in our translation, and came upon irreconcilable contradictions in both Epistles and Gospels. Passage after passage presented itself which in its strict meaning I could not accept. I fought as long as I could for the infallibility of the Gospels, but the facts were too strong for me. In particular the two narratives of the Miraculous Conception seemed to me not only irreconcilable with each other, but contrary to all the rest of the New Testament. Even the genealogies seemed to prove that Jesus was the son of Joseph. How else could he be son of David? I began also to doubt the reality of the Corporeal Ascension, and it shocked me that the loving Jesus was represented as saying, "he that believeth not shall be damned," and "Fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."

I believed that all that Jesus said was true, but I felt sure he could not have uttered these cruel words. To give isolated examples of what appeared to me erroneous doctrine, I found I did not accept Paul's ideas concerning marriage, in I Corinthians, vii; nor the statement, in I Timothy, vi,

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that "The love of money is the root of all evil." I knew that the love of money was not the root of idleness, drunkenness, profligacy or revenge ; for it sometimes restrains these vices and encourages industry, temperance, and prudence. I made the discovery that many scholars of every sect believed that Paul did not write the epistles to Titus, and Timothy, and the Hebrews, nor John the Revelation, nor Luke, Acts. I also found that the best teachings of Jesus, the two great commandments, were quotations from Leviticus and Deuteronomy, and that the golden rule had been previously given by Jewish rabbis and Greek philosophers, yet still I imagined that a personal faith in the presence of Jesus with us was essential to Christianity. My first sermons in the school took the ground that Christianity was Love to God, Love to Man, and Faith in Christ. It was the latter article in my creed which kept me confirmed in the belief that Theodore Parker was no Christian.

III.

WHERE I DRIFTED TO.

My studies at college and in the Divinity School had carried me out of the belief in the infallibility of Scripture with which I began. Even in the words attributed to Jesus, I found errors. Still I held fast to my faith in him, not so much in his holiness and spiritual wisdom, as in the single idea of his omnipresence in the hearts of all believers : it seemed essential to the maintenance of religious truth in the civilized world.

One eventful day, more than four years ago, I heard a keen, strong sermon from Rev. O. B. Frothingham, against this very doctrine, and the whole idea of a technical faith in Christ. Now that I was obliged to look at this doctrine more closely than ever before, a very severe mental struggle, darkened by my fears for the future, and my great unwillingness to differ from my old friends and models in the ministry, ensued. I came out of that struggle without my old faith in Christ, but happy and strong in new faith in God. I found that my excessive admiration of Jesus had stood in the way of my faith in his Father and mine. I had put Jesus between me and my Father, and thus I had never seen how near God was to me, inspiring the very ideas of truth and righteousness which I had referred to the personality of Christ. Now I knew God's love as I had never known it before. Still the questions were not clearly answered, should I pray ? should I preach ? should I administer the communion ? should I name the name of Jesus in sermon and prayer, or should I follow literally the model of his Lord's prayer, and his Sermon on the Mount ? On all these points I felt completely uncertain. My old cable had parted and I was adrift. My anxiety brought a long illness upon me. Now I read Parker, Buckle, Hennell, &c., and found my faith strengthened, and my future duties became clear. Perhaps I owe my escape from Atheism to these books. Certainly I owe it to them that I did not withdraw from the ministry. I felt that where Parker had stood, there was a place for me. I do not agree with Parker in everything. I call no man master. But now, whatever else I believe, I hold with Parker, to the nearness of God to every soul ; to the influence of His Spirit over every heart ; to the perfect order of His Providence ; to our universal salvation through universal growth in

goodness, to a revelation of God through all his works, but most of all through our own souls, and to a human Jesus, whose life we can reproduce in our own. I am willing to accept the name of "Parkerite" from those to whom it means this. I do not seek it, but will not shun it. I can only hope to live up to my views as nobly as Parker did to his. All my views, all my hopes, and all my life, centre in these two words — Our Father.

FRED MAY HOLLAND.

ENGLAND AT THE GRAVE OF PALMERSTON.

"General Conway asked me if this earthquake (the French Revolution) was not a theme to moralize on. I told him that it made me feel more disposed to immortalize."—*Horace Walpole*.

YESTERDAY, at one o'clock, the body of Henry John Temple Viscount Palmerston, sometime Prime Minister of England, and Knight of the Garter, was buried in Westminster Abbey. He lies between Pitt and Fox, whose great parliamentary contests he witnessed; with Canning—his master—at his feet; with Grattan on one hand, and the statue of Chatham rising above him. It is a fitting spot for his rest; it is the Valhalla of the true worshippers of England. He had lived for England; in her had lived, moved, and had his being. When England wore shoe-buckles and powder, he had worn them; when England wore pig-tails, he wore them; when England shed those old leaves, he shed them. With England he tolerated Eldon and Castlereagh and defended the cruel Sidmouth; with her demanded the detention of "the enemy to mankind" on the rock of St. Helena, vowed that no one of his name should rule in Europe, and twelve years after the exile's death *with her* was the first to welcome, and even assist, to the throne of France the usurper whose only title thereto was written in the blood of innocent men and women on the second of December. A Tory when England was Tory; a Whig when England was Whig; a liberal proposing Reform when she was in that mood, a conservative paralysing reform when she was in that. Never in any instance during those eighty-one years of life did he lead public opinion; never in any did he refuse to follow it. With him, as the *London Times* said with a fidelity to truth which the journals around it have not imitated, "Opinion not seldom made evil good and good evil." His long administration of public affairs was, the *Times* naively adds, unbiassed "by any prejudices of his own." There was a similar truth in the motto which Palmerston assumed, and which was blazoned all over the pall and hearse which bore him to the grave — "*Flecti non frangi*." Bend, O shade,—or shadow, shall I say?—of England! you certainly did; pliancy, ductility, made you for fifty years the figure-head of England, where many a man with less *bend* about him was *broken*.

He lived for England; verily, he hath his reward,—Cambridge House in this life, and a princely cortege around a grave in the old Abbey, with the sure hope of a resurrection in marble above it.

England at the Grave of Palmerston. 147

Slowly emerging from the enclosure of his magnificent residence came the great hearse, with a forest of tall dark plumes on the top of it, and with it a long line of distinguished equipages. The Lord Mayor's gaily painted coach, just as it glittered before the first and latest Whittington, drawn by festooned horses; the coaches of the Mayors of Liverpool, of Edinburgh, and other cities, each vying with the others, in the amount of tinsel it could display, and the gaudy liveries which could be spread upon its driver and footmen; the Queen's only a little more decent coach, and the Prince's—each with four horses and outriders all in scarlet; the long line of Dukes, Peers, Lords, and others following; then thirty or forty corporations; then soldiers on foot; then the tail of people diminishing to the ragged boys,—all these saw I with these eyes crawling through London streets, like some huge primeval monster with glittering scales, half-frozen by the uncongenial climate of the Nineteenth Century, and going to bury itself in the old Westminster rock with the fossil forms to which it belongs. He passed Marlborough House, where she who will some day be Queen stood, in deep mourning, at the window, to see the fading rays of this Setting Sun; he passed close to the monument of Nelson; by the spot where Queen Eleanor's rest left its mark in Charing Cross.

When his hearse passed by Whitehall, I thought of Cromwell's head which once looked down, from its pale throne, on the mob, for weeks, and reflected how different was the fate of him who "bends" and of him who bends not. Tyburn trees, and heads stuck on poles, and two hundred years of execration for the one; Premierships, Viscounts' crowns, and tombs among the great for the other.

Within Westminster Abbey were gathered over one half of the nobility of England. The Prince of Wales and the Duke of Cambridge enter with the Dean of Westminster. Then the chanters meet the coffin with its rich crimson pall at the door, and the organ breaks forth with its voice which sends its sweet notes, like the rains of God, alike on the just and on the unjust. Then through the chanting voices of boys alternating tenderly with the deeper tones of the adult singers, with the slow tread of the procession up the aisle, beating time, come forth old burthens of prophets and composers long dead—"I am the Resurrection and the Life"; "I know that my Redeemer liveth"; "We brought nothing into this world." The coffin rests at last, and a cushion with the coronet is placed upon it. Then the Ninetieth Psalm to Purcell's music is sung; then Lord Thynne reads from Paul about the trumpet that is to sound and the angels who are to meet the sleepers whom it will awaken, and who are to be caught up into the air.

At that moment, though the procession had come through the sunshine, a tremendous black cloud floated over the sky, and sank even near to the towers of the Abbey. The gloom was so deep that only those who stood very near could see the white surplices of the clergy or of the choristers. The rain came down,—as if even the English sky felt akin to one who was in every fibre so English. The wind swept about the old walls, and amid the gloom and darkness of the organ, as the singers sang Handel's grand Anthem, "His body was buried in peace, but his name will live forevermore."

In that cloud the body is lowered. When the words "dust to dust" are uttered, not dust but gold rings fall on the coffin! When the grave is covered over, the sun comes out again, lighting up the swords of heroes, the trumpets of angels and of Fames. When Nelson was buried a similar cloud overshadowed the vast crowd who did homage to him, arousing an almost superstitious feeling among them. Now it only scattered the vast swarm of people who pressed about the railings without.

For meanwhile a few feet from the royalty, the aristocrats with their badges, the officials with their purple and gold, was a seething roaring sea of those who make the shame—as the others inside, the glory—of England. Thousands on thousands of beggars, thieves, prostitutes, drunkards, have gathered to gaze on the gay coaches, on the nobility, on the Prince. "These be they gods, O Israel!" Might not one conceive, however, a Premier, or First Man, who with sixty years of unlimited power and wealth would manage to have fewer rags, even if less gold, around his grave, and more of the blessings of the needy, if fewer jewels, to fall on his coffin.

The man who received these honors was a man notoriously self-indulgent. He was not only a worldly man; he was far from being a virtuous man. Of this the *Times* says:—

"We however, who breathe a religion, the Founder of which was set at naught for His social habit, because he came eating and drinking, may learn not to think less of a statesman because of his geniality, his ready jest, and his open house."

Such then, O rising generation, such is the Standard of character which England erects for you as that of success. "Blessed are they who serve England right or wrong," saith her beatitude, "for theirs shall be every earthly honor,"—though the poor groan, and the hands of despots throughout the world—be they French usurpers or Southern Legrees—be strengthened. And though they be war instead of peace-makers, they shall inherit the earth. Rejoice when all English-men speak well of you. Nay, if you do but bend, and swerve, and rise and bow as England wills, you may eat, drink and be merry, and when you die, the *Times* shall find in your self-indulgence your special resemblance to the Saviour of Mankind! c.

LETTER FROM JAMES FREEMAN CLARKE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE RADICAL.

DEAR SIR:—In your October number, when introducing Mr. Henry James's letter, (which somewhat criticises the utterances of your journal) you say that you are pleased to receive such criticism. Allow me, then, to make a few remarks on Mr. Johnson's "Discourse," in the same number. I have always wished to see a periodical devoted to discussions of important subjects, which would welcome statements and arguments, if able and candid, on both sides of such questions. I once proposed such a publication, to be called the "Arena," but we failed in establishing it.

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First, of personal matters. Mr. Johnson refers to my Convention Sermon. He speaks of its "gentle management" and "mild manipulation." Allow me to say, that no manipulation, mild or rude, was intended by me. I know nothing about management. Without consulting any one, I gave my own idea of the work the Unitarian Conference had to do. This seemed the natural subject for an opening sermon. If I manipulated any body, I am not aware of it.

Mr. Johnson is also displeased because I spoke of its being the duty of Unitarians to carry the Gospel to heretics and outsiders. He thinks it "most unbecoming" that I should pretend that Unitarians have any message for such persons. But Mr. Johnson is wrong in supposing that I meant to try to teach anything to himself and his friends. I did not refer to them, but to others, doubters and seekers, outside the Christian body, who have not outgrown Christianity, but have never had it. Perhaps it will be conceded, even by these advanced thinkers whom Mr. Johnson represents, that Christianity may be good for such persons, if only as a stepping stone.

Mr. Johnson thinks I am blind to the facts of the times. I have spent a large part of my active life outside of Massachusetts, and my statements were not founded on theory but observation and experience. I am sorry to offend the advanced guard of thought here in New England, but am obliged to say that liberal Christians have a mission and a word for outsiders.

Mr. Johnson states the great religious question to be between the authority of infallible teachers, including Christ, on the one hand; and the authority of the private reason on the other. He thinks that if Christ be recognized as authoritative Lord and Master, private reason is dethroned.

Now, instead of this question being the great question of the age, it seems to me to be mostly a question of words—a distinction falsely so called. For if it can be shown that the advocate of infallible authority, and he of private reason, do accept the same rule of judgment, and must do so, then this whole question is evidently verbal, not rational—and the sooner we cease arguing about it, the better for the interests of knowledge.

Now the most Orthodox Roman Catholic, who believes, *first*, that Christ was infallible; *Secondly*, that those who wrote down his words were infallible; and *Thirdly*, that his Church is the infallible Interpreter of these words; is obliged nevertheless, to make his own reason the supreme judge at last of what that Infallible Interpretation of the Infallible Record of the Infallible Revelation means. He merely asserts their Infallibility as SOURCES, and in themselves. But to him nothing is infallible but his own knowledge. The reason of the Roman Catholic is just as supreme a judge to decide finally and without appeal between truth and falsehood as that of the most advanced radical.

And, on the other hand, the most pronounced radical may and does admit that Christ is a *Source* of Truth. If he is a man of reverence, as well as a radical, he will probably expect to learn something which he did not know before from the words of all wise and good men. Christ being by admission, an eminently wise and good man, the radical is bound to place

his mind in a receptive attitude while in his presence. He must hold the critical judgment still, while the apprehending power is acting—for such is the law of the human mind. The greatest radical that ever lived, the greatest radical now living, cannot, at the same moment, be receiving a truth or doctrine, and disputing it. *Every* teacher, who has anything to say, speaks with authority—only the Scribes, who have merely words and no insight, speak without authority.

The Roman Catholic and Protestant therefore, do not differ, and cannot as to the power which is to decide what truth is—they only differ in regard to the channels through which truth comes. The Protestant says *the Bible* is the channel through which Christian truth comes to us; the Roman Catholic says, *the Bible and the Church*. The Orthodox Protestant differs from the Unitarian Radical, not at all in regard to the criterion of truth, but only as to its Sources. Orthodoxy regards Christ and the Bible as Sources of truth, in a higher sense, apparently than they are regarded by the radical. But even here the distinction is only of more and less, and not a distinction of principle. For the radical certainly considers Christ and the Bible as a source of truth—only he does not go to them so much as to others. He goes to science; he goes to the Vedas, (when he can find them); he goes to Emerson and Thoreau; he goes to Theodore Parker, Herbert Spencer, and Miss Cobbe.

Therefore, the question between outward authority and inward freedom, which Mr. Johnson says is the great religious question of the age, resolves itself at last into a mere question of more or less. Every one must rely, to some extent, on outward authority; but some rely on it more, and some less. The radical reads in a receptive and deferential way, the writings of Emerson and Parker. When these writers say something which seems strange, unintelligible or absurd, they do not think it to be so. They rather think that they do not understand aright, as yet, these sayings of their masters. They believe in order to understand. When Mr. Emerson says "the soul knows no persons" he seems to contradict all experience; but his devout scholar does not criticise or question this saying. If Paul had said it, his first thought, perhaps, would be to show its error. When Mr. Emerson says it, he rather looks to find in what sense it is true, rather than in what sense it is false; and thus he discovers what his author means, and gets sight of a new truth.

Every one who is seeking truth, has some master or masters, toward whom he takes this attitude of reverence, and believes in order to understand. He begins with the receptive act, and ends with the critical. Thus the Platonist reads Plato; and until he can understand Plato's ignorance, concludes himself ignorant of Plato's understanding. "*Credo, ut intelligam*," is his motto. So the Shakespeare-scholar studies Shakespeare; and, meeting with a tough passage, does not infer stupidity in his author, but rather stupidity in himself—and so picks his flint and tries again. Is this superstition? Is it slavery to the letter of Plato or Shakespeare? I do not think so. The great masters of thought go before us clothed with this authority; and this authority helps us to a greater insight. Faith is John the Baptist, going before Knowledge to prepare its way.

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And, on the other hand, every one who believes at all must have more or less of Inward Freedom. What though I believe every word of the Bible infallibly true, I open it and read this saying of Jesus, "If any man come after me and hate not his father and mother, and his own life, he cannot be my disciple." I cannot accept that literally. I must find out what it means : and among all possible meanings, I select that which most accords with my idea of Christian truth. That is, I treat the words of Jesus just as the Platonist treats the words of Plato, or the Shakspeare scholar the words of Shakspeare, when these seem to contradict other words of Plato or Shakspeare. We judge them by the analogy of faith. Thus, the most implicit believer in the inspiration of the Bible, must constantly exercise Inward Freedom in reading it.

If Mr. Johnson asserts that we must not read the words of Jesus or Paul with a predisposition in their favor, expecting to find in them truth rather than error—I ask if he will apply the same rule in reading Plato and Shakspeare, Parker and Emerson? If not, why not.

It is a question of more and less. Mr. Johnson is mistaken in saying, "if our souls may be trusted in the search for truth, then we do not need and cannot have authoritative teachers, creeds, churches, books." The more we trust our souls, the more we need, and will have, such teachers. If we reject Jesus, we shall take Auguste Comte or Herbert Spencer. As soon as I begin to seek for truth I want a teacher. As soon as I begin to travel, I need a guide. I hire a courier, or I buy Murray's Hand Book, and trust them to lead me where I want to go. I do not believe Murray infallible, yet I follow his authority, and even trust my life to the truth of what he says.

The question between authority and freedom is a question of more and less. Men of reverence rely too much on authority—skeptics and critics too little. Lord Bacon compares these different classes to ants and spiders. The superstitious man is like the ant, who takes the grain just as he finds it, and adds it to his heap. He who rejects authority and trusts only to the soul is like the spider, who spins his web entirely out of his own bowels. But the wise seeker is neither ant nor spider, but rather a *bee*, who goes abroad to find his food, but works it all up according to the law of his own nature. Yet even the ant must exercise *some* faculty of selection, and some freedom of choice, in finding its grains—even the spider must catch flies and eat them before it can make its web. It is not then a question of hostile and mutually exclusive principles. It is a question of more and less. Most men have too much of the ant in their nature, a few have too much of the spider. And occasionally you may find a bee, in whom the two principles are well balanced.

Mr. Johnson rejects with energy the idea of a supernatural Lord and Master, and regards the papacy as the logical result of the declaration of Paul, that the man Jesus is the one mediator between God and man. But consider how we speak of lesser masters. On the statue of Sir Isaac Newton in Trinity college is the inscription, "*Qui genus humanum ingenio superavit*;" thus ascribing to him superhuman genius, if not supernatural. And concerning the same great man, Pope writes,

"Nature, and Nature's laws lay hid in night ;
God said ' Let Newton be,' and all was light."

If such things may be said of Newton, one would suppose it allowable for us to say of him to whom the human race comes to God as a father, that he is the medium between God and man.

"No — not *the* medium — not *the* mediator — that," perhaps you say, "we do not admit. We admit that Jesus was *a* mediator, one mediator among many, but not that he was the only mediator ; since God mediates Himself through nature, the universal reason, and other inspired men." True. And who denies it? Certainly not the apostle Paul, who declared Creation also to be mediatorial when he said of God, that, "the invisible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead." When Paul said "there is one mediator between God and man," he did not mean to contradict what he said of God's not leaving Himself without a witness among the Gentiles, and of His not being far from any one of us. Among human mediators, Christ no doubt is the mediator ; since, as a matter of fact, it is Christ who has introduced among men the conviction that God is their Father. Christ is the one mediator between God and man. Not of the *Spirituality* of God, for that has nowhere been better seen or more absolutely taught than by the great mystics and sages of India. Not of the *Sovereign Will* of God, for that was mediated most fully through Judaism. Not of the struggle of *the Soul*, making progress or suffering defeat in presence of the inflexible laws of the universe — for that has been seen as plainly by the Buddhists, as by any other teachers. The great *Moral Laws* have been mediated in every age and land by Revelations to the conscience and reason of men, who "not having the law, did by nature the things contained in the law," and were a law unto themselves. But I ask Mr. Johnson, as a scholar, well acquainted with the various religions and sacred Scriptures of the world, whether he finds in any of them, except in Christianity, the revelation of God as *a Universal Father*, and its corollary of the brotherhood of man. For twenty years I have been a student of the Ethnic Religions, finding in them many of those great truths which are commonly supposed to be original in Christianity — but these two doctrines, the elements of all progress, and the spring of modern civilization, I have never been able to find except in the New Testament ; and of these truths therefore I think we may say that Christ is the one Mediator between God and man.

It is not necessary to say anything here in regard to those points wherein I heartily agree with the statements of Mr. Johnson. As a question of more and less, he argues well the cause of Liberty against Authority, and such arguments are always in order. No doubt it is important as ever to contend for liberty against authority. But what we need most of all is a clear distinction to show where and how Authority is in excess. We want a clear definition of the boundary line between legitimate authority and illegitimate, and this Mr Johnson does not give. No amount of eloquence will supply the want of such a definition. When it comes we shall all be glad to see it.

J. F. C.